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ABSTRACT

Intended to help teachers, administrators, and others improve oral and written communication programs in their schools and districts, this report provides a starting point for program review. Various sections of the report contain (1) copies of the Washington State Board of Education Goals for the Common Schools, and oral and written communications program goals from kindergarten through grade 12; (2) definitions of a number of terms used in education; (3) statements of responsibilities to learning shared by families, students, teachers, learning resource specialists, instructional aides and volunteers, building principals, superintendents, administrative staffs, and school boards; and (4) a copy of an instrument for the preliminary assessment of a school or district's oral and written communications program. (FL)

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Oral and Written Communications

Framework

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Under the leadership of Monica Schmidt, Assistant Superintendent, the Oral and Written Communication Task Force held its first meeting in September, 1981. The Task Force wishes to thank members of the original Task Force and the state-wide Task Force Reaction Panel for their valuable contributions, assistance and encouragement.

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SAYING IT WITH SOUNDS AND SYMBOLS

(Oral and Written Communications Framework)

PREFACE

The Division of Instructional and Professional Services identified oral and written communications as a high priority need through a Delphi Process Survey involving a random sample of over 1,000 educators across the state. In response to the survey, a division task force was formed to assist with program development. In addition, persons recognized for their leadership in oral and written communications were asked to assist throughout the project. Groups and organizations committed to improved learning opportunities for students have also been contacted for their expertise. Their ideas, comments and materials have led to the development of this and other publications.

This publication is one of a series designed to help teachers, administrators, and patrons improve oral and written communications programs in their school and/or district. The contents of this Framework provides a starting point for program review and includes: State Board of Education Goals for the Common Schools, Program Goals, Responsibilities for Learning, and a suggested Preliminary Evaluation Procedure.

The Preliminary Evaluation will provide an immediate perception as to the present conditions. It will not, however, provide solutions. To seek solutions and achieve significant change requires effort beyond the Preliminary Evaluation.

"There needs to be more than consciousness raising. We need to include competency, confidence raising and conviction building."

Sr. Mary Annette Dworshak,
Holy Names Academy
Seattle

GOALS FOR THE WASHINGTON COMMON SCHOOLS

Literally thousands of educators, parents, civic leaders, students and other community representatives took active roles in developing the Washington State Board of Education goals.

These goals reflect the thinking and feeling of a broad cross section of Washington citizens who took the time to carefully consider and answer the question: What are schools for?

The resulting goals are practical, realistic ideals each school must strive to attain in order to provide a quality education for all students.

Achieving the goals will require dedicated, cooperative effort on the part of school directors, administrators, teachers and parents - as well as countless other resources provided by the community, the state and the nation.

1. As a result of the process of education, all students should have the basic skills and knowledge necessary to seek information, to present ideas, to listen to and interact with others, and to use judgment and imagination in perceiving and resolving problems.

2. As a result of the process of education, all students should understand the elements of their physical and emotional well-being.

3. As a result of the process of education, all students should know the basic principles of the American democratic heritage.

4. As a result of the process of education, all students should appreciate the wonders of the natural world, human achievements and failures, dreams and capabilities.

5. As a result of the process of education, all students should clarify their basic values and develop a commitment to act upon these values within the framework of their rights and responsibilities as participants in the democratic process.

6. As a result of the process of education, all students should interact with people of different cultures, races, generations and life styles with significant rapport.

7. As a result of the process of education, all students should participate in social, political, economic and family activities with the confidence that their actions make a difference.

8. As a result of the process of education, all students should be prepared for their next career steps.

9. As a result of the process of education, all students should use leisure time in positive and satisfying ways.

10. As a result of the process of education, all students should be committed to life-long learning and personal growth.

DEFINITIONS

CURRICULUM

A written document containing goals and objectives, identified learning experiences, appropriate learning materials, teaching activities and strategies and methods for identifying student achievement. These areas may be sequentially developed.

EVALUATION

A means of measuring program improvement in oral and written communications in a school or school district over a period of time.

FRAMEWORK

A general arrangement/structure which provides limited guidelines and role definitions from which specific guidelines, curricula, courses and/or units of study may be developed.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

The process of interacting with others through heard and spoken messages.

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

A means to measure the current state or condition of oral and written communications at the individual school level.

PROGRAM

A broad interpretation of an area of study and/or learning but not as detailed or structured as a curriculum. A program may cross over into other areas of study. For example, a district's writing program may be included in social studies, language arts and health.

PROGRAM GOALS

K-12 goals which do not specify grade placement. These goals provide the basis for generating subgoals or objectives for courses or units of study within a subject area. Program goals are used as a basis for defining the outcomes of broad areas of study.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Writing is the process of selecting, combining, arranging and developing ideas in effective sentences, paragraphs and longer units of discourse.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM GOALS (K-12)

In 1979, as part of the small schools curriculum project, persons recognized for their knowledge and expertise were asked to assist by developing the following K-12 program goals.

* 1. The student acquires, interprets, and evaluates information through purposeful and critical observation and listening.

* 2. The student expresses and interprets ideas, attitudes, and feelings in verbal and nonverbal ways.

* 3. The student uses language effectively with others, gaining and improving speaking and listening skills.

4. The student recognizes that ideas are expressed in many ways, through varieties of dialects, verbal modes, styles and usage levels, associations and points of view.

5. The student writes openly, creatively, and clearly.

6. The student demonstrates speaking and writing skills needed to succeed in educational, vocational, and social interests.

7. The student knows that one's experience in the world is given meaning and shape by his/her speaking and writing.

8. The student adapts speech and writing to different purposes, audiences, and communication forms.

9. The student uses the conventions of edited American English (spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammatical usage) to assure accuracy and clarity in communication.

10. The student writes and speaks in subjective, analytic and evaluative ways as a reflection of the life, values, and ideas of this and other cultures.

11. The student knows that language adapts to the needs of people through time.

* These program goals may also apply to preschool.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES TO LEARNING

The processes involved in learning to communicate through speaking and writing are encouraged and enhanced by the support of those who share responsibility for the education of students: The family, by establishing and maintaining a foundation for learning; students, by attitudes they display; teachers, by extending the learning process; specialists and librarians, by providing support for the total program; aides and volunteers, by reinforcing what has already been learned; principals, by working with teachers, parents, specialists, librarians, aides and volunteers; district administrators, by developing and maintaining a district operational structure; and the school board, by establishing policies and standards. When all these groups (parents, students, teachers, specialists, librarians, aides, volunteers, principals, administrators and school board) work together in a relationship of mutual respect, confidence and appreciation, students will move toward the ultimate goal of effectively using words to influence, express, control, and imagine.

The roles and responsibilities that each group or individual plays to ensure a successful oral and written communications program are outlined in the following pages.

THE FAMILY

A supportive family unit contributes to a student's positive attitude toward learning.

The types of experiences the family provides, particularly in the formative years, determines the foundation for their child's success in learning cognition and reading.

Families of elementary and secondary students can assist by:

- providing for their children a variety of enriching experiences
- spending time speaking and listening to their children
- working cooperatively with the school
- providing role models for their children
- ensuring that their children attend school physically and emotionally prepared
- ensuring that their children attend school regularly and on time

THE STUDENT

Students have a right to expect good instruction, but they also have a responsibility to reinforce that instruction. Students can fulfill their responsibilities by:

- attending school regularly with a positive attitude toward learning
- participating actively in oral and written communications programs
- accepting and respecting the needs of all students and the roles of all school personnel
- acting as a link between the home and school
- practicing the skills they have learned

"Parents need to be involved. The home is so critical in a child's learning."

Nelda Pool,
Roosevelt Elementary
Burlington-Edison School District

THE TEACHER

Within the school setting, teachers are the key to learning oral and written communication skills. Teachers can focus on the needs of their students and implement the instructional program by:

- basing instruction on current theory and research
- providing an interesting, challenging, supportive, and responsive environment
- demonstrating as a visible model the value of oral and written communications as a worthwhile and necessary activity
- basing their instructional program on the unique learning characteristics of their students
- determining the extent to which their students can apply their speaking and writing abilities to all school program areas
- encouraging students to respond through speaking and writing for a variety of purposes
- instructing students in the use of conventions of edited American English (spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammatical usage).

THE LEARNING RESOURCES SPECIALIST

The resources and services of a school learning resources center are fundamental to the oral and written communications program. School learning resources specialists serve as resource consultants to students and teachers and enhance and extend instruction by:

- evaluating and selecting materials - both printed and nonprinted
- making materials accessible to students and teachers
- working with teachers in curriculum planning and in designing intructional experiences using available research and professional materials
- assisting students to develop competence in the skills of listening and speaking

THE INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE AND VOLUNTEER

After effective training, instructional aides and volunteers, under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher, assist the oral and written communications program by:

- demonstrating a visible model as to the value of written and oral communication as a worthwhile and necessary activity
- reinforcing the concepts, skills and attitudes initially taught by the classroom teacher
- encouraging students to converse and to seek and find answers to their own questions
- helping to develop in students a zest and love for speaking and writing
- providing community resources that stimulate interest in speaking and writing

THE PRINCIPAL

The building principal, upon direction from the district administration, is responsible for providing leadership and support. Principals can foster curriculum improvement by:

- facilitating the identification of school and classroom objectives
- working with the staff to develop programs to meet school and classroom objectives
- assessing program progress toward meeting school and classroom objectives
- providing a climate for good working relationships
- establishing opportunities for communication among school staff and school community
- helping to establish a climate in which change can occur

THE SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

The district superintendent and administrative staff, upon direction of the school board, has the responsibility to provide the resources that allow all other persons and programs to work effectively in enhancing the potential of all students by:

- providing time on the superintendent's agenda for programs which will improve oral and written communications
- providing resources to send language arts teachers to conferences on written and oral communication programs
- encouraging and providing writing seminars for administrators, principals, and teachers
- implementing an evaluation instrument to assess district needs for improving the teaching and learning of oral and written communications

THE SCHOOL BOARD

School boards, through district superintendents, can facilitate the improvement of oral and written communications programs by:

- establishing the oral and written communications development of students as the major curriculum concern
- establishing lines of communication so that effective curriculum development is maintained
- making sure that staff, students, parents, and community are involved in the process
- providing means whereby individual school sites allocate resources based on priorities
- communicating to the community progress toward the attainment of objectives

"The key issue is instructional strategies and staff development. It is not the product but the process that would be most helpful/beneficial to teachers."

Gloria DeGaetano,
Issaquah School District

The Framework offers a starting place for assessment. It may provide an indication of the district/school oral and written communications programs' strengths and weaknesses.

PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

Review the Program Goals (page 4). Within the district and/or school oral and written communications curriculum:

	Robust	Healthy	Weak	Feeble
. There are student learning objectives for each of the program goals.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. There are materials to support each of the program goals.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. There are activities and teaching strategies to support each of the program goals.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. There are identified means for assessing student achievement.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/

Review of the responsibilities of each support group (pages 6-9). Is the district and/or school providing a means whereby:

	Robust	Healthy	Weak	Feeble
. Parents/guardians receive information and reinforcement as to assisting their child.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Students are aware of their responsibilities as a learner?	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Teachers are provided training and materials to assist them in their responsibilities to students.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Specialists and librarians are informed of program needs.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Aides and volunteers receive information and training to assist students.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/

"The needs are going to be different depending on location of school districts."

Anne Gere,
University of Washington

	Robust	Healthy	Weak	Feeble
. Principals give time and resources to assist the program and staff.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. District superintendents and administrative staff provide resources and support to the program.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. School board members communicate program needs to staff and the community.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

(Written Communications)

	Robust	Healthy	Weak	Feeble
. Writing is called for in other subject areas across the curriculum.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Students write in many forms (e.g., essays, notes, summaries, poems, letters, stories, reports, scripts, journals).	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Students write for a variety of audiences (e.g., self, classmates, the community, the teacher).	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Students write for a wide range of purposes (e.g., to inform, to persuade, to express the self, to explore, to clarify thinking).	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Program includes all aspects of the writing process: generating ideas, drafting, revising and editing.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/
. Program focuses on developing and expressing ideas and using the conventions of edited American English.	/_/	/_/	/_/	/_/

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

(Oral Communications)

	Robust	Healthy	Weak	Feeble
. Oral communication instruction is a clearly identifiable part of the curriculum.	☐	☐	☐	☐
. Oral communication instruction provides a wide range of speaking and listening experiences:-	☐	☐	☐	☐
a. a range of situations; informal to formal, interpersonal to mass communication	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. a range of purposes; informing, learning, persuading, evaluating, messages, facilitating social interaction, shared feelings, imaginative, and creative expression	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. a range of audiences; classmates, teachers, peers, employers, family, community	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. a range of communication forms; conversation, group discussion, interview, drama, debate, public speaking, oral interpretation	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. a range of speaking styles; impromptu, extemporaneous, and oratory	☐	☐	☐	☐
. Oral communication is called for in other subject areas across the curriculum.	☐	☐	☐	☐
. Oral communication instruction emphasizes the interactive nature of speaking and listening.	☐	☐	☐	☐

"For the last 25 years there have been two universal arguments - we don't have time and we don't have money. These are both red herrings. We should look at it as 'We have this much money and we have eight hours. How do we reorganize to meet priority needs.'"

Tom Barton,
Washington State University

Review the answers and list those items marked "robust."

Review the answers and list all the items marked as "weak" or "feeble."

Discuss results with others. What does the preliminary analysis indicate?

"We are faced with declining resources and yet do not have a choice. We have to do it, whether there is foundation money there or not."

Grant Hendrickson,
Longview School District

STATE AND NATIONAL PROGRAMS

Puget Sound Writing Project
Attention: Dr. Anne Gere
University of Washington GN-30
Seattle, Washington 98195
Phone: (206) 543-2100

Writing Northwest
Attention: Dr. James Sabol
Seattle Pacific University
Third W. and W. Bertona Street
Seattle, Washington 98119
Phone: (206) 281-2000

Writing in the Humanities
Attention: Dr. Thomas Barton
Washington State University
Pullman, Washington 99164
Phone: (509) 335-2656

Direct Measures of Writing Skills: Issues and Applications
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
300 S.W. Sixth Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97204

Classroom Applications of Writing Assessment
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
300 S.W. Sixth Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97204

Project WRITE
Attention: Tanis Knight
Educational Service District 112
1313 N.E. 134th Street
Vancouver, Washington 98665
Phone: (206) 574-2871

RESOURCES

Materials available through the ERIC system:

Spotlight on Drama	ED 203 351
Small Schools Curriculum:	
Language Arts K-3	ED 205 326
Language Arts 4-6	ED 205 328
Language Arts 7-8	ED 205 329
Language Arts 9-12	ED 205 330

Contact: EDRS
P.O. Box 190
Arlington, Virginia 22210

Development of Functional Communication Competencies Pre K-6 ED 137 858

Contact: ERIC
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801

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"Standards for Basic Skills Writing Program: College English v41, n2, p. 220-22, October 1979. EJ210765

Contact: National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801

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Standards for Effective Oral Communication Programs

Contact: Speech Communications Association
5105 Backlick Road
Annadale, Virginia 22003

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Washington State Resource Book
Division of Instructional and Professional Services
Superintendent of Public Instruction
7510 Armstrong Street
Tumwater, Washington 98504
Phone: (206) 753-2858

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Writing in the Secondary School - English and the Content Areas
Arthur N. Applebee

Contact: National Council of Teachers of English
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

These materials are available to assist school districts in oral and written communication programs. They may be obtained at your Educational Service District.

Development of Functional Communication Competencies: Pre-K - Grade 6, ed. by Barbara Sundene Wood. Speech Communication Association, 1977.
Development of Functional Communication Competencies: Grades 7-12, ed. by Barbara Sundene Wood. Speech Communication Association, 1977.

Provides teachers with the best educational theory and/or research and presents descriptions of classroom activities which assist the teacher in putting this theory into practice.

Handbook for Planning an Effective Writing Program: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. California State Department of Education, 1982.

Provides school administrators and teachers with a standard for assessing their existing writing programs and a tool for helping them design new programs. Both the content and teaching strategies of a writing program K-12 are addressed.

How to Help Your Child Become a Better Writer. National Council of Teachers of English.

Suggestions for parents on becoming an active participant in their child's education as a writer. Divided into two sections: "Things to do at Home" and "Things to do for School Writing Programs."

National Standards for Oral and Written Communications. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

A reprint of the Standards for a Basic Skills Writing Program (NCTE) and Standards for an Effective Oral Communication Program (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and Speech Communications Association). Helpful as a starting point in identifying strengths and weaknesses of existing programs and the environment of support throughout the school.

Developing Oral Communication Skills. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

Includes two papers and a bibliography on oral communication. "Developing Oral Communication Skills, K-12" by Jody Nyquist and Barbara Clinton, is supportive material to the Wood series (Development of Functional Communication Competencies) and assists the practitioner in implementing effective oral communications skills which can be expected of students. The introduction by Phil Backlund and John Johnson includes some thoughts on speech communication research.

Saying it with Sounds and Symbols: Oral and Written Communications Framework. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

Provides a starting point for program review. Includes State Board of Education Goals for Common Schools, Program Goals, Responsibilities for Learning, and a Preliminary Evaluation Procedure.

Studying: A Key To Success....Ways Parents Can Help, by Ann Erickson. International Reading Association.

Gives tips on ways parents can help their children in learning to study effectively.

Writing Programs in Washington State. Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1982.

Includes a research synthesis on effective writing programs, followed by abstracts of classroom writing programs, including mini-grant projects. Bibliography.

Writing in the Schools: Improvement Through Effective Leadership, by Allan A. Glatthorn. National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1981.

Written for the administrator, this book describes the writing process--how to improve writing, how to supervise its instruction and how to evaluate a writing program.

Your Home is Your Child's First School, by Norma Rogers. International Reading Association. (Adapted from How Can I Help My Child Get Ready to Read?)

Suggestions for parents in assisting their children in the development of reading skills.